

# Chronicles of Food Protection

[www.vdacs.state.va.us/fdsafety](http://www.vdacs.state.va.us/fdsafety)

July 2004

Greetings Food Industry! We hope you all are having a wonderful and safe summer so far. You'll find information in this newsletter on the latest food security news and legislation, as well as the latest developments and happenings within our program.

## Food Security

Every day there seems to be something in the news about terrorist activity. Recently, reporters mentioned that there is credible intelligence suggesting that another terrorist attack is planned in the United States in the next few months. If you haven't started to incorporate food security into your establishments, now is the time! Tips on some basic food security steps you can take in your establishment are listed below.

## Receiving/Inspection

- With summer here, it's often tempting to leave dock/storage doors open, but please keep these doors closed and locked when they are not in use. This will help to ensure deliveries to your establishment are verified or authorized. In addition, it prevents strangers from having easy access to your food storage areas and causing harm or damage.
- Inspect the condition of all ingredients, including commercial premixes, food service products, and hazardous chemicals prior to accepting the shipment. If something does not look right to you or there is evidence that a package may have been tampered with, do not accept the shipment and have it removed from your establishment immediately. Document this on your receiving log.

## Crisis Management

- Develop procedures for recalling your products and for quickly identifying and isolating recalled products. When items are returned to you due to a recall, be sure there is an appropriately

marked and designated area to store these recalled items. Good record keeping and coding procedures are always helpful in the event of a recall.

## General Security

- Be sure to account for all keys, uniforms, and ID badges provided to former employees. You might want to consider changing locks on critical areas from time to time.

FDA has guidance booklets available for Retail Food Stores and Food Service Establishments and for Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters. Our office has obtained numerous copies of the booklets for Retail Food Stores and Food Service Establishments and will be distributing them to our Food Safety Specialists. Our Food Safety Specialists will hand out the booklets to retail food store operators during their routine inspections. Copies of these and other guidance documents can also be found on the FDA's Web site at [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/guidance.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/guidance.html) under Food and Cosmetic Security.

## FDA's Bioterrorism Legislation

### Registration

Just a reminder that all owners, operators, or agents in charge of domestic or foreign facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or hold food for human or animal consumption in the U.S. are required to register their facility with FDA.

If you would like more information on how to register your facility or on exactly who is exempt from this registration, you may visit [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~furls/ovffreg.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~furls/ovffreg.html).

## Detention

If FDA has credible evidence or information that a food presents a threat of serious adverse health consequences or death to humans or animals, they have the authority to detain that food. If a food is detained, a copy of the detention order would be given to the owner, operator, or person in charge of the establishment where the food is located and to the owner of the food.

A detained food can be permanently removed from commerce or if the food is determined to be safe, the detention order can be terminated. The final rule requires that detained food be held in a secure location and may not be moved from where it has been ordered detained until the detention order expires or FDA releases the detention.

## Prior Notice

If you plan to import any food into the United States for humans or animals, you must notify FDA in advance, unless the food is excluded from this rule.

Prior notice must be received and confirmed electronically by FDA no more than 5 days before arrival, and depending on the mode of transportation, no less than 2-8 hours before arrival.

For more specific information on notification times, exclusions, etc., please refer to “What you Need to Know about Prior Notice of Imported Food Shipments,” a publication by FDA.

If you would like more information on the bioterrorism regulations mentioned above or would like to access guidance documents on these topics, please visit [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fsbtact.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fsbtact.html).

## Food Safety

A lot has been going on in the world of food safety. Summer is a busy time of year; not only are concerns about proper storage and cooking temperatures at the forefront, but so are administrative issues with the changing of the fiscal year.

## Legislation/Administrative

Many of you have been receiving inspection fee bills for the past couple of years as a result of legislation that was passed by the General Assembly in 2002. This year is no exception. You should expect to see inspection fee bills arriving in the mail sometime between the summer and fall, as the bills are generated in cycles. If this is your first time to receive a bill from our Department, please visit our Web site at [www.vdacs.state.va.us](http://www.vdacs.state.va.us) and click on Inspection Fees-Food Safety at the bottom of the page for a list of frequently asked questions.

## Labeling

It seems as though low carbohydrate diets are the latest craze among Americans and the food industry is responding by offering a variety of new products. Please be advised that FDA has not yet defined terms such as “low”, “reduced”, or “free” with respect to carbohydrates. FDA has received petitions from industry and trade groups asking them to define such terms. The agency has filed these petitions and intends to initiate rule making proceedings to address these issues in the future. However, according to FDA, because there is currently no definition for “low carb” and other nutrient content claims for total carbohydrate, use of such claims for carbohydrates causes a product to be misbranded.

An exception to this is the use of “net carbs”. This, too, has not yet been defined by FDA, but the agency has said that they would not object to “net carb” statements appearing on labels, unless they became aware that the claims were false or misleading. FDA has advised firms that in order for “net carb” statements to not be misleading, labels must include information regarding the meaning of the term within the context of the label. FDA intends to provide guidance to food manufacturers in the future on the use of the term “net” in relation to the carbohydrate content of food at the same time that the agency will provide information on the other carbohydrate content claims discussed above.

## ❖ *WORD JUMBLE* ❖

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## “Active Managerial Control”

As a manager or person in charge of a food establishment, whether it is a processing or retail establishment, you have certain responsibilities with respect to ensuring food safety within your facility. These responsibilities include:

- Understanding the relationship between the prevention of a food-borne illness and the personal hygiene of an employee who handles food. By washing hands often, after using the restroom, and between handling raw and ready-to-eat foods, the chance of cross contaminating food with harmful bacteria can be greatly reduced.
- Understanding that it is your responsibility to prevent the transmission of a food-borne illness by restricting or excluding employees who handle food who have a disease or medical condition that may cause a food borne illness. This requires you to be observant and to gain the trust of your employees so that they will tell you when they are sick and the symptoms they are having. Perhaps they can still report to work, but simply need to be reassigned to a non-food handling area of the establishment.
- Being aware of and understanding the symptoms associated with diseases that are transmissible through food. Often times, these symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, and abdominal cramps.
- Understanding the significance of the relationship between maintaining the time and temperature of potentially hazardous foods and the prevention of a food borne illness. This is where that old saying, “Keep hot foods hot and cold foods

cold” comes into play. The longer potentially hazardous foods are kept in the “danger zone” (46°F-139°F), the likelihood that bacteria will grow to a level high enough to cause food borne illness increases. You and your staff should be aware of the required temperatures and times for hot holding, cooling, cold storage, and reheating of potentially hazardous foods.

- Understanding the hazards involved in the consumption of raw or undercooked meat, poultry, eggs, and fish. Bacteria harmful to our bodies naturally appear on raw meat, poultry, eggs, and fish. If these foods are not cooked to the proper temperature, bacteria will survive and can cause a food borne illness. Therefore, you must be aware of the proper cooking times and temperatures of these and other potentially hazardous foods.

FOOD	°F
<b>Ground Meat &amp; Meat Mixtures</b>	
Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb	160
Turkey, Chicken	165
<b>Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb</b>	
Medium Rare	145
Medium	160
Well Done	170
<b>Poultry</b>	
Chicken & Turkey, whole	180
Poultry breasts, roast	170
Poultry thighs, wings, legs	180
Duck & Goose	180
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165
<b>Fresh Pork</b>	
Medium	160
Well Done	170
<b>Ham</b>	
Fresh (raw)	160
Pre-cooked (to reheat)	140
<b>Eggs &amp; Egg Dishes</b>	
Eggs prepared for immediate service	145 for 15 seconds
Eggs prepared but not for immediate service	155 for 15 seconds
Egg dishes	160
<b>Leftovers &amp; Casseroles</b>	
	165

- Understanding the relationship between the prevention of a food borne illness and the management and control of:
  - a. Cross contamination
  - b. Hand washing
  - c. Maintaining your establishment in a clean condition and in good repair.
- Understanding the correct procedures for cleaning and sanitizing utensils and food contact surfaces of equipment.<sup>1</sup>

3. Empty dumpsters often. The heat often increases spoilage rates, which in turn attracts birds, rodents, and other pests.

Have a safe summer and don't forget to begin preparing for hurricane season which tends to be particularly active in the fall. Be prepared for power outages with summer storms, as well. If there are topics you would like to know more about, please send us an e-mail at [foodprotection@vdacs.state.va.us](mailto:foodprotection@vdacs.state.va.us).

<sup>1</sup> 2001 Food Code, Chapter 2, pgs 21-22.

## Summertime Reminders

1. Don't prop open doors or leave loading dock doors up when they are not in use. This invites birds into your establishment, which is a violation of the VA Food Laws.
2. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. This can often be a challenge during the hot summer months. Store food shipments promptly and properly.

### Answer to Word Jumble:

Don't wait; incorporate food security into your establishment today!

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### CHRONICLES OF FOOD PROTECTION

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